

Getting the Fuck Out of Derry by isnt_that_wizard

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Summary:

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The Losers Club is 18 and reaching the deadline to apply for colleges. They have a plan to all apply in New York so they can be close

together and away from Derry. It seems that Mike, however, has a wrench to throw in those plans, but not if his boyfriend Stan has anything to say about it.

Getting the Fuck Out of Derry

Stan must have checked his phone a million times in the past week. Every time it went off, every time he thought it had, and even when he knew it hadn't, Stan picked it up, scrolling through his notifications to try and find what he was looking for. Every time, there was nothing. It had been five and a half days and counting since he had received a call, text, Snapchat, or anything from his boyfriend, Mike. It was making him worry more than he was willing to let on. They weren't one of those couples that had to be texting each other every minute of every day, and Stan wasn't in any way expecting that, but they did still talk nearly every day. Stan knew it was a busy week for Mike's farm and that even though they had no school this week that would be where his boyfriend would spend almost all of his time, but still, Mike seemed to take the time out of even the busy times to talk to Stan, even if it was just long enough to say a quick "I love you" or send some stupid meme he'd found.

With growing anxiety that maybe he'd done something wrong to make Mike was upset with him or that it was just him, Stan had talked to the other Losers. Richie, Eddie, and Ben frowned and said that they hadn't heard anything from Mike lately, either. Bev shrugged and said that other than seeing his grandfather's beat up, forest green pick-up truck drive into town to make what she assumed was a delivery, she hadn't seen him all week. Bill had looked at the ground away from Stan, chewing on his lip a little as he stuttered through telling Stan that no, Mike hadn't talked to him lately, but he was sure he was fine. That was all two days ago, and after talking to all of them, Stan sighed, got on his bike, and made the long journey out to the farm. Apparently, Stan learned after talking to Greg, one of the farm hands, he had just missed Mike, who had gone to the next town over to pick up some new tool that his grandfather insisted they needed. Greg had no idea when Mike would be back, though he was guessing it would be at least two hours, so Stan, dejected and worried, rode his way back home.

Now, after almost six days of stewing in his stress, pacing back and forth in his bedroom, and gluing himself to his phone in a way he rolled his eyes at other people for, Stan grabbed his mom's car keys, stuck his phone in his pocket, and mumbled a quick "Fuck it" as he walked out the door. He was going to head over to the farm to at the very least make sure his boyfriend was still alive, and if Mike wasn't there, he would just wait around until he got back. Everyone who worked or lived at the farm knew Stan well at this point- he and Mike had been dating for a year and a half- and none of them would mind him hanging around. As he started on the drive, his newfound conviction started to wear away. Shit, what if Mike just really didn't want to see him? What if he was avoiding them because he didn't care about them any more, didn't want to be their friend? What if he wanted to break up with Stan and just didn't know how? Stan tightened his grip on the steering wheel and tried to shake the worries off. That was ridiculous. Mike loved all of them, loved Stan. There had to be some other explanation.

When Stan arrived at the farm, his eyes immediately found Mike. His boyfriend was wearing his muddy, paint splattered work jeans and a too tight, slightly sweaty green henley. Even in his worry, Stan's brain couldn't help but focus in on the way the shirt almost perfectly showed off the muscles in Mike's arms and abdomen and he bent to pick up heavy boxes and buckets. Mike, as always, was way too damn hot for Stan to know what to do with, and he blew out a long breath as he put his car in park and shut off the engine. He closed his eyes for a second, having to remind his 18 year old brain that this was *not* what he was here for. He climbed out of the car and it was then that Mike seemed to catch sight of him. He froze for a minute, just standing back up from moving something and setting it down, but he seemed to reset himself quickly enough, a smile forming on his face as he raised a hand to wave at Stan. Mike had on what Ben had dubbed his "Stan smile", but Stan couldn't help but notice that it looked a little more hesitant today, almost like he was masking something else.

Stan didn't wave back, just kept walking up the farm's impossibly

long dirt driveway and walking over to the barn Mike was standing in front of. Stan wasn't sure what to say as he approached his boyfriend, though Mike pressed a kiss to his cheek once he got close enough.

“Hey, Stan. What are you doing here?”

Stan shrugged, not knowing exactly how to feel. Here stood Mike, his boyfriend and probable love of his life, greeting him and acting like he hadn't just disappeared off the face of the earth for a week.

“I wanted to see you,” Stan started, not entirely sure where he was going, “I haven’t heard from you.”

Mike seemed to get slightly more tense, and if it was anybody but Stan, it probably wouldn't have even been noticeable. But Stan noticed everything about Mike. Mike frowned towards the ground for a second before saying, “Yeah, sorry. I’ve been super busy with the farm and. . . yeah, it’s just been busy.”

Stan hummed, “And that’s why. . . literally none of us have heard from you?”

Stan when a little bit of anger and frustration had seeped into his tone, and Mike kept his eyes trained on the dirt below them, letting out a sigh of, “Stan. . .” before turning and moving his way into the barn, towards the sheep pens.

“Mike, please,” Stan said, following his boyfriend into the barn and leaning against a large hay bale in the corner. His eyes trailed Mike moving around the pens in a way that seemed fidgety, filling water and food for the sheep. “No one has talked to you or seen you in a week. Something’s obviously wrong, so can you just tell me what it is?”

Mike shook his head, “Nothing, there’s nothing wrong. It’s just been busy around here and I haven’t really had my phone-”

“Mike, come on. I know you better than anyone.”

Mike had his back to Stan, though he could tell that Mike was running his hands over his face in a way he knew Mike did out of nerves, stress, or frustration. “Stan, babe, it’s fine, okay? I’m fine.”

Stan shook his head, pushing his way off the hay bale and walking over to Mike. He placed a hand on his boyfriend’s shoulder, looking at Mike’s face, which was staring straight ahead at the wooded wall of the barn.

“Mike, please,” Stan whispered, his voice once again losing his conviction. “Don’t shut me out, okay? We don’t do that. Something is wrong and I need you to stop pretending you’re okay because I know you’re not. You’re not talking to me, you’re barely looking at me while I’m standing right next to you, and all I can think of. . . Look, if you’re going to break up with me-”

“Stan!”

“-then please just do it because having you not talk to me or any of us is killing me. If this is because of me or if I did something-”

“Stan, god, no! I’m not breaking up with you. I . . . god, never.”

Stan bit his lip as Mike looked at him in shock and sadness. Stan felt stinging in the back of his eyes at his own words. Until he was saying it out loud to Mike, he hadn't really thought about what might happen if Mike actually did break up with him, what he would do. He loved Mike so fucking much he didn't know what to do with himself. Mike turned to face Stan, causing his hand to fall off his shoulder, though Mike caught it before it could fall back to Stan's side. He twisted their fingers together before lifting them and pressing a kiss to Stan's knuckles. Stan blinked away the tears in his eyes and stared into Mike's.

“Then what is it, Mike? What's wrong?”

Mike sighed again, leaning forward to press their foreheads together and closing his eyes. Stan reached up with his free hand, placing it on the side of Mike's face and neck. “Please tell me,” he mumbled into the space between them.

Mike nodded, moving his head to kiss the top of Stan's cheek before pulling away entirely and moving to a spot on the wall of the barn. Stan knew exactly where Mike was going. In one of the only places in which the barn was actually floored, there was a loose wooden panel that was just enough movable for Mike to have created his own secret hiding spot. It was big enough to put pieces of paper, books, photographs, and anything else Mike wanted to keep safe from the

wandering bodies and eyes of everyone who worked on the farm. Stan was the only other person who knew it existed. He watched silently as Mike bent down, lifting up the floor board and pulling out what looked like a letter. He walked back over, handing it off to Stan silently.

“What’s this?”

“Open it,” Mike shrugged.

Stan looked down at it, his mouth dropping open slightly. The return address of the letter was marked at Columbia University. Stan made quick work of opening it, eyes scanning the letter to his boyfriend. *Michael Hanlon, Congratulations! We are pleased to inform you. . .*

“Mike, holy shit. Holy shit! You, you got accepted!”

Mike smiled just a little, nodding. Stan didn’t understand Mike’s reaction, why he was treating this like some everyday news. Columbia was Mike’s dream school! He’d been talking about going there since they became friends. Stan didn’t know for sure that Mike had applied, but he had been pretty positive that he had. In fact, all the Losers had applied to schools in New York. Eddie, Richie, Bill, and Stan had all applied for NYU, and Bev and Ben had applied and gotten into specialty schools for design and architecture. Stan knew Mike had applied to some other schools that weren’t Columbia and weren’t in New York City, though he hadn’t heard back from most of them.

“When did you get this?” Stan asked, still in awe that Mike had *gotten*

into Columbia .

“It arrived last Saturday.”

“So you’ve had this for. . .” Stan did a quick calculation, “six days?”

Mike nodded with a sigh, reaching out to take the letter back from Stan.

“So what, you got the letter and suddenly decided to stop talking to all of us? Mike, all of us would be over the moon that you got into the school. You love Columbia and it means all of us will be in the same city. This is so amazing!”

Mike shut his eyes tight, gripping the letter tight in his hand. “I’m not going.”

Stan froze, his mouth open. “You’re. . . *what?* ”

“I mean I’m not going to Columbia, Stan,” Mike sounded pained as he spit out the words. “I’m not going to Columbia and I’m not going to New York.”

Stan stared at his boyfriend in confusion and shock. He couldn’t be serious, could he? They had all talked about leaving this godforsaken town for *years*.

“Mike, what the fuck are you talking about?”

Mike shook his head sadly. “Stan, I don’t- I can’t. . . I’m not going because I’m staying in Derry.”

“Like fuck you’re staying in Derry! What the hell-”

“Stan, please,” Mike said, looking at Stan with so much sadness in his eyes that it hurt Stan’s heart. “Don’t you think saying that is killing me? I’ve been agonizing over this since I got the fucking letter. That’s why I haven’t talked to you or the others. I got the letter and I didn’t know how to tell you guys.”

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“I have to stay in Derry,” Mike mumbled and Stan shook his head.

“Why? Why do you have to stay?”

Mike scoffed, blinking away more tears. “If nothing else, I can’t afford going to Columbia. The farm does pretty well, but it’s so expensive. We can’t afford for me to move all the way out to New York and go to the school, too. And my grandpa. . . he’s getting worse, Stan. He can still do all the business aspects, but he barely even comes out of the house to work anymore. He *can’t*. What’s he

gonna do if I leave? He needs me here. It's better if I just stay here."

Stan shook his head again, bringing his hand up to Mike's face. "Better for who? For you? You'll sit here and be miserable. You don't want to spend your life working and living on this farm and everyone, including your grandfather knows that. He wants you to be happy and live your life, Mike. He's said a million times that he has no problem with hiring another person when you leave. And you'll get so many scholarships you won't know how to handle all that money. Besides, I know for a fact you haven't even looked at your FAFSA application yet. Have you even talked your grandpa about any of this?"

Mike let out a deep breath, then shook his head.

"Then why have you already resigned yourself to staying trapped in this hell hole?"

Mike didn't answer. Stan pursed his lips, making quick conversation with himself before saying out loud, "Well, if you're staying here than so am I."

Mike's eyes snapped up to look at Stan's. "Stan, no."

"Well, why not? I'm not going to know what to do without you in New York. So I'll stay here. I can take my classes online and I'll- I don't know, I'll get a job with Went's dentistry. He's always liked me pretty well."

“Stan, you can’t stay in Derry.”

“Well I’m sure as hell not leaving you here by yourself so either you come with all of us to New York like we planned or I’m calling Went right now.”

Mike was silent as Stan stared his boyfriend down. There was no way Mike was going to stay in this town that hated him just for his skin color. There was no way Mike was resigning himself to something he hated and giving up all his dreams. There was no way that Leroy Hanlon would not support his grandson’s dreams and figure out exactly how they were going to get Mike to Columbia. There was no way Mike was staying here by himself. Stan would make it his hill to die on. After what must have been several minutes of silence between them, Mike suddenly leaned forward, capturing Stan’s lips with his own. As he always did, Stan melted into the kiss, pushing into Mike. He felt his boyfriend’s arms come around his waist and back tightly and his own landed with his hands against Mike’s chest. The kiss was long and deep, one that made Stan forget that it was air that he needed to live, not Mike’s lips on his own. When they broke apart, it was because Mike had moved on to peppering much lighter kisses around Stan’s face, across his cheekbones and down his jaw, ending with one on Stan’s nose that made him giggle.

“I love you, Stan,” Mike whispered when he was finished, tears still in his eyes but a smile back on his face.

“I love you, too.”

Mike’s arms grew more lack around his waist, though they still held him close. “Do you really think we’ll be able to figure it all out?”

Stan smiled, "Yeah, I do. It'll suck and I'm sure we'll want to kill ourselves half the time, but we'll do it together and have all the Losers. None of us deserve being stuck in this fucking town."

Mike's lips twitched up in a smile and he nodded. "I suppose I should start telling everyone that I got accepted into Columbia."

"You think? I can't believe you didn't fucking tell me sooner," Stan said, glaring with no real heat.

"I almost did. I must have picked up my phone 50 times a day to call you."

"I was getting really worried when I didn't hear from you at all this week," Stan said shyly, not wanting to give Mike a reason to feel any more guilty but knowing he should say something.

"I'm so sorry, Stan. I didn't mean for that."

"I know, it's okay-"

"No, it's not. You thought I was going to *break up with you* . I never want you to think that. Baby, I love you so much and I promise I have never once thought about breaking up with you."

Stan smiled up at him, kissing him for just a moment, "That's good because you're not getting rid of me any time soon."

Mike huffed a laugh, saying, "I wouldn't want to."

Stan pulled out of their position pressed together, taking hold of Mike's hand that wasn't holding his Columbia acceptance letter. He started walking them out of the barn and in the direction of the farmhouse, where he could see Mike's grandfather sitting at the kitchen table. Mike, it seemed, could see him too, and he turned to Stan with his eyebrow raised.

"Babe, you're gonna make me tell him *now*? "

"No time like the present," Stan said with a smile and Mike playfully shook his head at him. He pulled on their joint hands, causing Stan to stumble into Mike's side. He felt a kiss press into his curls before Mike took lead, willingly walking them into the house and to the kitchen to tell his grandfather that he was ready to start living his dreams. Stan smiled and held his hand the whole way, proud and completely in love.